

Arkansas Department of Human Services  
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

**FAMILY SUPPORT UNIT POLICY MANUAL REVISION**

*Effective April 1, 2004*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Purpose**

To provide DHS Executive Staff and interested parties an abstract of changes made to policy for the Family Support Unit in the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCC-ECE).

**Background**

The Family Support Unit (formerly known as the Child Care Eligibility Unit) of DCC-ECE administers the Child Care Assistance Program, which offers help to low-income families with child care expenses. After several years of operating with the current policy, it is evident that changes to some of the current policies will better serve the interests of clients, DHS and the State of Arkansas.

**Additions to Policy**

1. A mission statement articulating the focus of the program and providing guidance to employees and clients;
2. Guidelines for processing applications for Diverted TEA Child Care in collaboration with Division of County Operations staff;
3. New eligibility rules for students who are also employed; and
4. Instructions for handling special circumstances, including emancipated minors, relatives with custody of a child, a disabled spouse, and parents activated for overseas military duty.

**Modifications to Current Policy**

1. The time for clients to report changes to the Child Care Eligibility Specialist is increased from five (5) days to ten (10) days;
2. The minimum number of weekly work hours required for eligibility has been reduced from 35 to 32;
3. As part of the application procedure, all applicants must complete a Declaration of U.S. Citizenship or Satisfactory Immigration Status (DCC-540);
4. A statement from a non-custodial parent attesting to child support payments will no longer be accepted without a copy of checks or money orders to validate the statement;
5. If a voluntary statement documented with checks or money orders is offered as proof of payment of child support, the payment amount must at least equal the minimum amount set by the Family Support Chart of the Arkansas Office of Child Support Enforcement; and

6. Policies governing overpayments and fraud referrals have been streamlined to provide field personnel a consistent and precise system for submitting these referrals to Division Administrative staff.

### **Deletions**

1. The requirement of case closure when a client voluntarily quits a job and/or accepts new employment with a lower rate of pay;
2. Job responsibilities for Family Support Unit employees;
3. Definition of child care provider types (*These regulations fall under the authority of the Child Care Licensing Unit, and, as such, are inappropriate for this policy manual.*);
4. Listing of eligibility category codes;
5. Disqualification of a student for failure to report a decrease in course load below full-time status;
6. Securing information on family resources (*Obtaining information on resources is no longer an eligibility requirement.*); and
7. Interfacing with other agency programs.